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Remarks

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The above Amendments and these Remarks are in reply to the Office Action mailed December 28, 2006. A Petition for Extension of Time is submitted herewith, together with the appropriate fee.

I.   Summary of Examiner's Rejections

Prior to the Office Action mailed December 28, 2006, Claims 1, 2, 4-12, 14-20, 22-24, 28, 30, 31 and 34-39 were pending in the Application. In the Office Action, Claims 1, 11, 24, 28, 34, 36, 38 and 39 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 11, 12, 14, 15, 17 and 22-33 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Meltzer et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,226,675, hereafter Meltzer) in view of Kuznetsov (U.S. Patent No. 6,772,413). Claims 6, 8, 9, 16, 18 and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Meltzer and Kuznetsov in view of Borwankar (U.S. Patent No. 6,594,693). Claims 10 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Meltzer, Kuznetsov and Borwankar, in further view of Pinard et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,230,287, hereafter Pinard). Claims 34-39 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Meltzer and Kuznetsov, in further view of Burridge (U.S. Patent No. 6,446,116).

II.   Summary of Applicant's Amendment

The present Response amends Claims 1, 11, 38 and 39; and cancels Claims 34 and 36, leaving for the Examiner's present consideration Claims 1, 2, 4-12, 14-20, 22-24, 28, 30, 31, 35 and 37-39. Reconsideration of the Application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

III.   Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112

In the Office Action, Claims 1, 11, 24, 28, 34, 36, 38 and 39 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. Claims 34 and 36 have been canceled, rendering moot the rejection of these claims; while Claims 1, 11, 38 and 39 have been amended as shown above to address any indefiniteness. Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 1, 11, 38 and 39, together with Claims 24 and 28 dependent therefrom, now conform to the

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requirements of 35 U.S.C.112, and reconsideration thereof is respectfully requested.

IV.   Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

In the Office Action mailed December 28, 2006, Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 11, 12, 14, 15, 17 and 22-33 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Meltzer (U.S. Patent No. 6,226,675) in view of Kuznetsov (U.S. Patent No. 6,772,413). Claims 6, 8, 9, 16, 18 and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Meltzer and Kuznetsov in view of Borwankar (U.S. Patent No. 6,594,693). Claims 10 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Meltzer, Kuznetsov and Borwankar, in further view of Pinard (U.S. Patent No. 6,230,287). Claims 34-39 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Meltzer and Kuznetsov, in further view of Burridge (U.S. Patent No. 6,446,116).

Claim 1

Claim 1 has been amended by the current Response to more clearly define the embodiment therein. As amended, Claim 1 defines:

> *1.   (Currently Amended) A conversation manager executing on an intermediate collaboration server for managing the flow of messages using different local business protocols in a collaboration system, comprising:*
>
> *a conversation initiation logic that initiates a conversation among a plurality of participants, wherein said conversation is a collective set of messages exchanged by the plurality of participants according to an extensible protocol, wherein the extensible protocol provides an ability for a sending participant to specify both a routing information and a business protocol to be used by the sending participant within the conversation, and wherein the routing information is specified by the sending participant in a header of the extensible protocol;*
>
> *a participation registration logic that registers said participants in said conversation;*
>
> *a conversation repository that stores conversation management data used to manage said conversation among said plurality of participants;*
>
> *a plurality of business protocol handlers, each of which are configured to recognize a different business protocol vocabulary chosen from the group of RosettaNet, XOCP, or other business protocols, and convert incoming messages from participants for routing by the conversation manager, and wherein any one of the business protocols is selected and used by a participant to send and receive messages according to the particular business protocol vocabulary and process flow that is used locally by that participant;*

> *a plurality of decoders that receive incoming messages from senders, identify protocol-specific headers in the incoming messages and assign the incoming messages to an appropriate business protocol handler;*
>
> *a plurality of encoders that send outgoing messages to recipients, including assigning the outgoing messages to an appropriate business protocol handler that matches the business protocol vocabulary of the recipients; and*
>
> *a transport configured to accept messages from the participants using any of a plurality of different business protocols, identify a business protocol being used, and invoke one or more of said plurality of decoders and encoders to communicate the messages between a first participant using a first business protocol vocabulary, and a plurality of other participants using different business protocol vocabularies,*
>
> *wherein the business protocol is identified by the sending participant according to a uniform resource locator (URL) which is selected and used by the sending participant to communicate with said conversation.*

Claim 1, as currently amended, defines a conversation manager for managing the flow of messages between two or more participants that use different local business protocols. The conversation manager comprises an extensible protocol that provides an ability for a sending participant to specify both a routing information and a business protocol to be used by the sending participant within the conversation. The conversation manager further comprises a plurality of business protocol handlers, each of which are configured to recognize a different business protocol vocabulary chosen from the group of RosettaNet, XOCP, or other business protocols, and convert incoming messages from participants for routing by the conversation manager. Any one of the business protocols is selected and used by a participant to send and receive messages according to the particular business protocol vocabulary and process flow that is used locally at that participant. The business protocol is identified by the sending participant according to the uniform resource locator (URL) which is selected and used by the sending participant to communicate with the conversation.

The advantages of the embodiment currently defined by Claim 1 include that the conversation manager allows each sending participant to select any one of several business protocol vocabularies supported by the conversation manger, and to participate in a conversation with other participants, while still using their own local business protocol vocabulary. For example, one participant may locally use a RosettaNet business protocol vocabulary to define its own

business processes, while another participant may locally use an EDI business protocol. By providing a plurality of business protocol handlers, even though these participants may choose to use different business protocols locally, the conversation manager can still support a conversation between them.

Meltzer discloses a participant server which processes documents for commerce in trading partner networks. As disclosed by Meltzer, business interface definitions (BIDs), which describe the documents to be exchanged, are communicated to members of the network. The business interface definitions tell potential trading partners the services the company offers and the documents to use when communicating with such services. (Column 2, lines 34-48).

Kuznetsov discloses a flexible transformation mechanism that facilitates generation of translation machine code on the fly. As disclosed by Kuznetsov, a stream of data arrives from an external source, such as an application server, and the headers and other selected fields are separated and processed to detect source and destination identification information, along with the data format and the protocol being used. (Column 9, line 58 - Column 10, line 5). One or more FMRFD parsers provide inputs to a DATADEF source interface and one or more DMAP parsers provide inputs to a DATAMAP source interface. The parsers can be selected as appropriate for parsing FMRFD inputs provided as C/C++ Headers, ASN.1 formats, IDL, or other standard or proprietary parsers can be adapted to generate the required DATADEF from the corresponding FMRFD formats. (Column 12, line 63 - Column 13, line 18).

Burridge discloses a method and apparatus for dynamically loading a transport mechanism in a multipoint data delivery system. As disclosed by Burridge, the transportation mechanism is a protocol stack identifying the transportation protocol used. The transportation protocols may include transmission control protocol (TCP), user datagrams protocol (UDP), remote method invocation (RMI), T.120, Common Object Request Broker Architecture (CORBA), Scaleable Reliable Multicast (SRM), and other transportation level implementations. (Column 1, line 55 - Column 2, line 7).

Applicant respectfully submits that the proposed combination of references appears to differ in several respects from the embodiment defined by Claim 1, as currently amended.

Meltzer appears to disclose a system in which a participant communicates with another participant (or a group of participants) by a first (sending) participant sending a document that

conforms to the specification or BID of a second (receiving) participant. However, in the embodiment of Claim 1, a participant is free to use any business protocol supported by the collaboration server, and is not restricted to conforming to the protocol of the receiving partner. Claim 1 has been amended to more clearly define that the business protocol to be used by the sending participant is identified by the sending participant, according to a uniform resource locator (URL) which is selected and used by the sending participant to communicate with the conversation.

Kuznetsov appears to disclose program language (C/C++ headers) headers which are contained in a stream of data, together with a method for converting one XML data format into another data format in the context of e-business application. Burridge appears to disclose transportation protocols such as transmission control protocol (TCP), user datagrams protocol (UDP), remote method invocation (RMI), T.120, Common Object Request Broker Architecture (CORBA), and Scaleable Reliable Multicast (SRM). While each of the above references appear to describe the use of different formats or protocols, the protocols themselves appear to be different from those used in the embodiment of Claim 1. Claim 1 has been amended to more clearly define a plurality of business protocol handlers, each of which are configured to recognize a different business protocol vocabulary chosen from the group of RosettaNet, XOCP, or other business protocols, and convert incoming messages from participants for routing by the conversation manager, and wherein any one of which the business protocols may be is selected and used by a participant to send and receive messages according to the particular business protocol vocabulary and process flow that is used locally by that participant.

Applicant respectfully submits that the above features are similarly neither disclosed nor suggested by the other cited references, including Borwankar or Pinard, when considered alone or in combination.

In view of the above comments, Applicant respectfully submits that Claim 1, as currently amended, is neither anticipated by nor obvious in view of the cited references, and reconsideration thereof is respectfully requested.

Claims 11, 38 and 39

Claims 11, 38 and 39 have been amended similarly to Claim 1 to more clearly define the embodiments therein. Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 11, 38 and 39, as amended, are

likewise neither anticipated by, nor obvious in view of the cited references, and reconsideration thereof is respectfully requested.

Claims 2, 4-10, 12, 14-20, 22-24, 28, 30, 31 and 34-37

Claims 34 and 36 have been canceled, rendering moot the rejection of these claims. Claims 2, 4-10, 12, 14-20, 22-24, 28, 30, 31, 35 and 37are not addressed separately, but it is respectfully submitted that these claims are allowable as depending from an allowable independent claim, and further in view of the amendments to the independent claims, and the comments provided above. Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 2, 4-10, 12, 14-20, 22-24, 28, 30, 31, 35 and 37 are similarly neither anticipated by, nor obvious in view of the cited references, and reconsideration thereof is respectfully requested.

V. Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims now pending in the subject patent application should be allowable, and reconsideration thereof is respectfully requested. The Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned if he can assist in any way in expediting issuance of a patent.

Enclosed is a PETITION FOR EXTENSION OF TIME UNDER 37 C.F.R. §1.136 for extending the time to respond up to and including June 28, 2007.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any underpayment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 06-1325 for any matter in connection with this response, including any fee for extension of time, which may be required.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: _____June 28, 2007_____   By: ___/Karl Kenna/_____
                                              Karl Kenna
                                              Reg. No. 45,445

Customer No.: 23910
FLIESLER MEYER LLP
650 California Street, Fourteenth Floor
San Francisco, California 94108
Telephone: (415) 362-3800